



ACUB

ARMY COMPATIBLE USE BUFFER PROGRAM



Conservation easements protect the habitat of the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program creates land conservation partnerships between the Army and outside organizations to conserve land from development that is incompatible with the military mission. To date, over 55,000 acres of land have been protected at more than 16 installations.

BACKGROUND

The United States originally established military installations in rural areas far from population centers. However, as the Nation's population has grown, suburban sprawl poses a threat to installation operations.

As a result, military commanders often face the challenge of meeting realistic training and testing requirements without impacting sensitive habitat or the neighboring community. This means addressing issues that arise from noise, dust and smoke produced during training activities; protecting cultural and historic resources; and conserving natural resources, including endangered species found on and around the installation.

In North Carolina, in order to sustain its military mission and the natural environment, Fort Bragg partnered with The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Environmental Command, to develop an innovative approach called the Private Lands Initiative. The primary purpose of this effort was to recover the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, thereby reducing Army training restrictions.

Congress endorsed the Army's Private Lands Initiative approach and expanded its use through the passage of the 2003 Defense Authorization Act. The Act provided the military with clear legislative authority (10 USC §2684a) to partner with government or private organizations to establish buffer areas in the vicinity of active training and testing areas. The Army subsequently created the ACUB Program to implement these authorities.

For more information

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HOW DOES THE ACUB PROCESS WORK?

The ACUB process is initiated by an installation, but is reviewed, approved and funded centrally by Army headquarters. It involves a legally binding agreement between an Army installation and another party (non-governmental, state or local government) that enables the other party to acquire land or interest in land from a willing private landowner in the vicinity of Army training areas. This partner organization uses military money supplemented by additional public/private sources to purchase land titles and/or easements. These titles and easements are then conserved in perpetuity. The partner organization, not the Army, receives the deeded interest in the property and provides long-term habitat management.

Through this effort, the Army and its partners each achieve their individual objectives. The Army avoids suburban sprawl on its borders which leads to greater training flexibility and continued environmental stewardship. Subsequently, partner organizations also meet their objectives such as natural resource protection, hunting, agriculture, public recreation, cultural preservation, and other Army compatible interests.

ACUB PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

- Conservation of natural resources
- Protection of other compatible land uses
- Sustain military training

For more information on the Army Compatible Use Buffer program, go to <http://aec.army.mil/usaec/natural/natural03a.html>.



A neighborhood sits next to the installation fence line at Camp Bullis, TX.

